

THE PUGILIST

A STREETFIGHTING CLASS WITH SWAGGER TO SPARE

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PUGILIST

Arrows rain down around her as she runs towards the hobgoblins. Desperate to close the distance, the half-orc fights through the sting of a dozen cuts to reach her foes. The pain only makes her stronger. As she descends on the hobgoblins she swings wildly, knocking hobgoblins to their feet and sending the rest scattering before her.

He braces himself for the impact as the orc rushes him. Then the orc makes a mistake, telegraphing its next move, and that's all the opening the human needs. He ducks beneath the orc's wide swing then raises both hands high above his head and brings them down on the orc's back, throwing the brute to the ground.

The dwarf smiles broadly and chuckles as the petty noble raises his hand to strike him for the impudent remark. Quick as a flash the dwarf shatters the bottle in his hand against the bar and puts it between himself and the noble. The noble flinches, stumbles backward, and runs away as the dwarf turns back to the bar to order another round.

Wherever they come from, pugilists live a rough and tumble life that leaves them full of determination and reckless from overconfidence or desperation. In a fight they can channel this strength of character to dig deep and fight off foes in greater strength of numbers, arms, and armor than anyone else would think possible.

SWAGGER FOR DAYS

Pugilists unconsciously tap into their own inner strength in the form of an energy called moxie. This is not an esoteric or mystical energy that flows through the multiverse but the result of determination forged over a lifetime of hardship and a never-let-die attitude. You can teach someone how to fight but you could never teach someone how to be a pugilist. The secret of mastering moxie doesn't come from disciplined study or rigorous training, it comes from years of wanting and needing. Using this energy, pugilists can withstand attacks that would down lesser heroes and hit harder and faster than their armed opponents.

LIFE ON THE STREET

Every city in the worlds of D&D have its back alleys, its underground fighting rackets, its ghettos. The pugilists who live in these places don't have time to consider the lofty ideals of philosophies or ponder the mysteries of the universe. The pugilists growing up on the wrong side of the tracks spend all their time chasing down their next meal or, if they're fortunate enough to have that, their next drink, bedfellow, or flophouse.

For pugilists, becoming an adventurer might be the only way out of whatever miserable situation they've been stuck in since infancy. For others, getting lost out in the world is the only way to escape the tangled web of debt or enemies they've piled up. Other pugilists fight because it's the only thing they know how to do. Whatever the reason for their adventuring, pugilists use their fists and boundless determination to achieve their goals and uphold their ideals.

CREATING A PUGILIST

As you build your pugilist, consider how you came to be a bare knuckle brawler. Did you learn to fight to defend yourself? Was scraping the natural result of your nose for trouble? Or did you learn to fight as a way of intimidating and controlling others? Were you fighting

for the entertainment of others or did you fight because you had to? Did you try to become a monk but just couldn't hack it? Pugilists are a rowdy bunch that like to brag about how they learned to fight so you better have a good story to tell.

What events in your life gave you the sheer determination and will that pugilists call on? Did you spend every day hustling on the street to make ends meet? Were you forgotten and ignored by your family, left to make your own entertainment? Were you an outsider in your community who had to constantly struggle against the ignorant stereotypes that people there had of you? The most important element of the pugilist is that they are driven. Once you have decided what events made you into the pugilist you are today, decide how that's going to shape the actions you take in the future.

QUICK BUILD

You can make a pugilist quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Strength your highest ability score, followed by Constitution. Second, choose the criminal or urchin background.

CLASS FEATURES

As a pugilist, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per pugilist level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per pugilist level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: Light armor

Weapons: Simple weapons, improvised weapons, whip, hand crossbow

Tools: One artisan's tools or gaming set or thieves' tools

Saving Throws: Strength, Constitution

Skills: Choose two skills from Acrobatics, Athletics, Deception, Intimidation, Perception, Sleight of Hand and Stealth.

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment in addition to the equipment gained by your background:

- (a) leather armor or (b) any simple weapon
- (a) a dungeoneer's pack or (b) an explorer's pack
- (a) a set of artisan's tools (b) a gaming set or (c) thieves' tools

FISTICUFFS

At 1st level, your years of fighting in back alleys and taverns have given you mastery over combat styles that use unarmed strikes and pugilist weapons, which are simple melee weapons without the two-handed property, whips, and improvised weapons. You may not use the finesse property of a weapon while using it as a pugilist weapon.

You gain the following benefits while you are unarmed or using only pugilist weapons and you are wearing light or no armor and not using a shield:

- You can roll a d6 in place of the normal damage of your unarmed strike or pugilist weapon. This die changes as you gain pugilist levels, as shown in the Fisticuffs column on the Pugilist table.

THE PUGILIST

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Fisticuffs	Moxie Points	Features
1st	+2	1d6	—	Fisticuffs, Iron Chin
2nd	+2	1d6	2	Moxie, Street Smart
3rd	+2	1d6	2	Bloodied but Unbowed, Fight Club
4th	+2	1d6	3	Ability Score Improvement, Dig Deep
5th	+3	1d8	3	Extra Attack, Haymaker
6th	+3	1d8	4	Fight Club improvement, Moxie-Fueled Fists
7th	+3	1d8	4	Fancy Footwork, Shake it Off
8th	+3	1d8	5	Ability Score Improvement
9th	+4	1d8	5	Down but Not Out
10th	+4	1d8	6	School of Hard Knocks
11th	+4	1d10	6	Fight Club improvement
12th	+4	1d10	7	Ability Score Improvement
13th	+5	1d10	7	Rabble Rouser
14th	+5	1d10	8	Unbreakable
15th	+5	1d10	8	Herculean
16th	+5	1d10	9	Ability Score Improvement
17th	+6	1d12	9	Fight Club improvement
18th	+6	1d12	10	Fighting Spirit
19th	+6	1d12	10	Ability Score Improvement
20th	+6	1d12	12	Peak Physical Condition

- When you use the Attack action with an unarmed strike or a pugilist weapon on your turn, you can make one unarmed strike or grapple as a bonus action.

IRON CHIN

Starting at 1st level, you can add your constitution modifier instead of your dexterity modifier to determine your armor class when you are wearing light or no armor and are not using a shield.

MOXIE

Starting at 2nd level, your experience laying the beatdown on others has given you a moxie you can channel in the midst of battle. This swagger is represented by a number of moxie points. Your pugilist level determines the maximum number of points you have, as shown in the Moxie Points column of the Pugilist table.

You can spend these points to fuel various moxie features. You start knowing three such features: brace up, the old one-two, and stick and move. You learn more moxie features as you gain levels in this class. You regain all expended moxie points when you complete a short or long rest.

BRACE UP

You can use a bonus action and spend 1 moxie point to brace for attacks. Roll your fisticuffs die + your pugilist level + your Constitution modifier and gain that many temporary hit points.

THE OLD ONE-TWO

Immediately after you take the Attack action on your turn, you can spend 1 moxie point to make two unarmed strikes as a bonus action.

STICK AND MOVE

You can use a bonus action and expend 1 moxie point to make a shove attack or the Dash action.

STREET SMART

Beginning at 2nd level, carousing, shadowboxing, and sparring all count as light activity for the purposes of resting for you. Additionally, once you have caroused in a settlement for 8 hours or more, you know all public locations in the city as if you were born and raised there and you cannot be lost by non-magical means while within the city.

BLOODIED BUT UNBOWED

Starting at 3rd level, when you are reduced to less than half of your maximum hit points you gain your pugilist level + your Constitution modifier in temporary hit points and regain all expended moxie points. You cannot use this feature again until you complete a short or long rest.

FIGHT CLUB

Starting at 3rd level, your style is exemplified in a fight club: the Squared Circle or the Sweet Science, both detailed at the end of the class description. Your fight club grants you features at 3rd level and again at 6th, 11th, and 17th level.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

DIG DEEP

Starting at 4th level, you discover a strength inside you that can't be broken. As a bonus action you gain resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage for one minute. At the end of that minute you gain a level of exhaustion.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

HAYMAKER

Starting at 5th level, before you make an attack roll with an unarmed strike or pugilist melee weapon attack that does not already have disadvantage you can declare you are swinging wild haymakers. You make all attack rolls until the end of this turn with disadvantage and when you deal damage you do not roll for damage but use the maximum die result instead.

MOXIE-FUELED FISTS

Starting at 6th level, your unarmed strikes count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance and immunity to non-magical attacks and damage.

FANCY FOOTWORK

At 7th level, you gain proficiency in Dexterity saving throws.

SHAKE IT OFF

Starting at 7th level, you can use your action to end one effect on yourself that is causing you to be charmed or frightened.

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

At 9th level, when you use your Bloodied but Unbowed feature you can choose to also use this feature. If you do, you add your proficiency bonus to your damage with unarmed attacks and pugilist weapons for the next minute. You can use this feature again after you complete a long rest.

SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

By 10th level, you've graduated top of the class at the school of hard knocks and you took most of them on the head. You have resistance to psychic damage and gain advantage on saving throws against effects that would make you stunned or unconscious.

RABBLE ROUSER

Starting at 13th level, word of your exploits travels quickly in cities and other settlements. Once you have taken a long rest by carousing in a settlement you gain advantage on all Charisma (Persuasion) and Charisma (Intimidation) rolls made against the people who live there.

UNBREAKABLE

Starting at 14th level, you gain advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws. Additionally, whenever you make a saving throw and fail, you can spend 1 moxie point to reroll it and take the second result.

HERCULEAN

At 15th level, your carrying capacity is doubled, your jump height and distance are doubled, and when you deal damage to an inanimate object that damage is doubled.

FIGHTING SPIRIT

Starting at 18th level, when you have 4 levels of exhaustion or fewer and are reduced to 0 hit points you regain half of your maximum hit points, half of your maximum moxie points, and gain a level of exhaustion. You cannot use this feature again until you complete a long rest.

PEAK PHYSICAL CONDITION

At 20th level, your Strength and Constitution ability scores increase by 2 to a maximum of 22. Additionally, when you take a long rest you recover 2 levels of exhaustion instead of 1 and you regain all your expended hit dice instead of half your expended hit dice.

FIGHT CLUBS

Despite the name, fight clubs are not formal fraternities or sororities but collections of pugilists who, by training or happenstance, share a similar style. In some D&D worlds, fight clubs can tell you a lot about where a person comes from while in others there are representatives of many fighting styles in all metropolitan areas.

THE SQUARED CIRCLE

Pugilists who fight in the Squared Circle know you don't have to knock an opponent senseless to get them to submit. Of course, members of the squared circle do beat their opponents senseless, they just know they don't have to.

GROUNDWORK

Starting when you choose this fight club at 3rd level, you gain the following additional moxie features.

Compression Lock. When a creature attempts to break a grapple with you and succeeds, you can use your reaction and spend 1 moxie point to force the creature to roll again. The creature must use the second result.

Quick Pin. When a hostile creature's movement provokes an opportunity attack from you, you can use your reaction and spend 1 moxie point to make a grapple attack instead of an opportunity attack.

To the Mat. You can use a bonus action and spend 1 moxie point to make a grapple attack against a creature within range. If successful, the creature is also knocked prone.

MEAT SHIELD

At 6th level, when you have an enemy creature grappled you gain half cover against all attacks made against you

by a creature you are not grappling. When a weapon attack made by a creature you are not grappling misses you, you may use your reaction and spend 1 moxie point to have that creature make the same attack with a new roll against an enemy creature you are grappling.

HEAVYWEIGHT

At 11th level, you count as one size larger than you are for the purposes of grappling. In addition, you can move your full movement speed when you are dragging or carrying a grappled creature your size or smaller.

CLEAN FINISH

At 17th level, your mastery of grappling reaches its peak. While you have a creature grappled you gain advantage on all attacks against it. Additionally, when you make an unarmed strike or pugilist weapon attack against a creature you have grappled you score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

THE SWEET SCIENCE

Pugilists who practice the Sweet Science hit hard, fast, and often. This style is sometimes used by fighters who battle for the entertainment of the upper classes, but is just as often practiced in the backalleys and the bars by those whose next breath depends on a knockout.

CROSS COUNTER

Starting when you choose this fight club at 3rd level, you can block the brunt of an attack and launch one of your own in the same fluid motion. You can use your reaction and spend 2 moxie points to reduce the damage of a melee weapon attack made against you by 1d10 + your Strength modifier + your pugilist level.

If you reduce the damage to 0, you can make an unarmed strike or pugilist weapon attack against a creature within range as part of the same reaction.

ONE, TWO, THREE, FLOOR

At 6th level, when you use your bonus action to use the Old One-Two and both attacks are successful you can immediately spend 1 moxie point to make an additional attack with an unarmed strike as part of that bonus action. If you hit with this additional attack you deal no damage and the creature is knocked prone.

FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY, STING LIKE A BEE

At 11th level, when you reduce damage from an attack to 0 and successfully hit an enemy creature using your Cross Counter feature you regain 1 moxie point.

KNOCK OUT

At 17th level, when you hit with an unarmed strike or pugilist weapon you can spend 1 or more moxie points to try to knock out the opponent instead of dealing damage. Roll 3d12 + 1d12 for every moxie point spent after the first + your pugilist level; if the total is equal to or greater than the creature's remaining hit points, it is unconscious for 10 minutes.

PUGILIST & MULTICLASSING

Pugilists follow all the normal rules for multiclassing. The following tables function as additions to those listed on page 163 and 164 of the *Player's Handbook*.

MULTICLASSING PREREQUISITES

Class	Ability Score Minimum
Pugilist	Strength 13 and Constitution 13

MULTICLASSING PROFICIENCIES

Class	Proficiencies Gained
Pugilist	Light armor, improvised weapons

NEW EQUIPMENT & MAGIC

ITEMS

DM's including the Pugilist class in their campaign might also consider using the following new equipment and magic items as well.

NEW WEAPONS

Consider the following weapons additions to the weapons list presented on page 149 of the *Player's Handbook*.

WEAPONS			
Name	Cost	Damage	Properties
<i>Simple Melee Weapons</i>			
Brass Knuckles	5 sp	1d4 bludgeoning	light
Cat's Claws	5 sp	1d4 slashing	light
Katar	5 sp	1d4 piercing	light

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

DM's may wish to use the following new magic items in their campaigns.

EVERFULL STEIN

Wondrous item, uncommon

This large ceramic stein is decorated with dwarven glyphs and topped with a brass metal lid that can be opened by thumb lever. While the lid is closed and the stein is empty, the owner need only name a non-magical ale, beer, or mead he has had before and the stein fills with that brew.

LEATHER JERKIN, +1, +2, OR +3

Wondrous item, rare (+1), very rare (+2), or legendary (+3)

You have a bonus to AC while you are unarmored and wearing this garment. The bonus is determined by its rarity.

LOADED DICE

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

This set of six sided dice are indistinguishable from mundane dice but blessed with good fortune. After you make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw but before the DM declares whether it was a success or failure you can expend 1 charge to reroll the d20. Loaded dice can have up to 6 charges and regain 1d6 charges each week.

Additionally, if used to play a dice game the owner of

the dice has advantage on any ability check to determine the winner of the game.

MEDALLION OF METTLE
Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

This ostentatious medallion draws the eye of even casual onlookers. Whenever you gain temporary hit points you gain an additional 1d6 temporary hit points.

PENITENT PUMMELERS
Weapon (brass knuckles, cat's claws, or katar), rare (requires attunement)

These weapons are made of gold and etched with a holy symbol over each knuckle. You gain a +1 to attack and damage rolls with this magic weapon. When you deal damage to a fiend or undead creature you deal an additional 1d6 radiant damage.

POUNDSWISE PORTER
Potion, very rare
This potion is thick and so dark brown it is nearly black. For one minute after consuming this potion you gain +3 to damage with unarmed attacks.

PREHENSILE WHIP
Weapon (whip), rare (requires attunement)

When not in use this whip looks like any other but when wielded by an attuned creature the weapon moves with purpose and articulation that betrays its magical nature. You gain a +1 to attack and damage rolls with this magic weapon. When you hit a creature or object with this weapon you may use your reaction to make a grapple attack against it using the whip instead of a free hand. While grappled in this way, your reach is considered 10 feet.

THUNDER KNUCKLES
Weapon (brass knuckles, cat's claws, or katar), very rare (requires attunement)

These weapons are made of blue cobalt rings with a silver knuckle guard in the shape of a cloudbank. When attuned to, the cloudbank darkens and shifts constantly across the knuckles of its wearer occasionally illuminating briefly as miniature lightning bolts harmlessly crackle within the clouds.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. When you attack a creature with this magic weapon and roll a 20 they take an additional 8 thunder damage and must succeed on a Strength saving throw (DC 16) or fall prone.

NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

Included here are several nonplayer characters that can serve as Pugilist inspired foes for use in your campaign.

BRAWLER
Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)

Senses passive Perception 9
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Iron Chin. While the brawler is wearing light or no armor and not using a shield, it may use its Constitution modifier in place of its Dexterity modifier to determine its AC.

ACTIONS

Brace Up. The brawler gains (7) 1d6 + 4 temporary hit points.

Fisticuffs. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage.

Multiattack. The brawler makes two fisticuff attacks or one fisticuffs attack and uses brace up.

WRESTLER

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (leather armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +5

Skills Athletics +6

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The wrestler makes three fisticuff attacks and a wrestling attack or two fisticuff attacks, brace up, and a wrestling attack.

Brace Up. The wrestler gains 10 (1d8 + 6) temporary hit points.

Fisticuffs. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) bludgeoning damage.

Wrestling. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* Creature is grappled or knocked prone, wrestler's choice.

REACTIONS

Quick Pin. When a creature provokes an opportunity attack from the wrestler, the wrestler may make two wrestling attacks.

BOXER

Medium humanoid, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (leather armor)

Hit Points 102 (12d8 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Athletics +7, Insight +2, Intimidation +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The boxer makes four fisticuff attacks or two fisticuff attacks and brace up.

Brace Up. The boxer gains 14 (1d10 + 9) temporary hit points.

Fisticuffs. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10+5) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Cross Counter. When hit by a melee attack the boxer can use this reaction to reduce the damage taken by the attack by 14 (1d10 + 9). If this reduces the damage of the attack to 0 or lower, the boxer may make a fisticuffs attack against the creature who made the attack if they are within range.